

**To the Mayor and Members of the City Council****April 17, 2020**

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SUBJECT: 2020 SUMMER PROGRAMS

The purpose of this Informal Report is to describe summer programming to be provided by the Park and Recreation (PARC), Neighborhood Services (NSD), and Library departments in view of public health concerns and budget constraints associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. PARC and NSD ordinarily start onboarding over 160 temporary summer staff in early spring each year. Due to disruptions caused by COVID-19 and the City's resulting hiring freeze, however, hiring these temporary employees is not practical this year. Summer programs include Summer Day Camp, Mobile Recreation, Aquatics, Youth Sports, Adult Sports, the Mayor's Summer Reading Challenge, and other library services.

Summer Day Camp

The City will not be able to hold the traditional nine-week Summer Day Camp because there is still too much uncertainty associated with the pandemic and its impacts; because the City's hiring freeze prevents us from onboarding of 90 camp leaders; and because hosting 1,800 or more children at City facilities would be inadvisable in the next few weeks, even after the economy begins to reopen. Nevertheless, we can offer alternative camp experiences that will fill a vital and essential community need. Once stay-at-home orders are rescinded, residents will get back to work and many will turn to the City to educate, entertain, and take care of their children at a reasonable cost. Therefore, we intend to hold a series of smaller mini-camps with existing community center staff as follows:

- Camps will run from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. instead of 7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
- Staff will set a weekly rate instead of full summer rates since the start date and duration are still unknown.
- Camp will be held at 19 community centers. The MLK summer program is operated through a grant and Sycamore will be used for youth sports camps serving other centers.
- Maximum numbers will be set per site and numbers drastically reduced. Ratios will be reduced from 1:15 to at least 1:10 in order to maintain social distancing standards and accommodate reduced staff oversight. We can thus serve a total of approximately 700 persons versus 1,800 in normal Summer Day Camp.
- Existing staff will be used instead of hiring seasonal employees, resulting in a salary savings of \$399,000.
- Field trips, special events, and transportation will be drastically reduced.
- Sites will budget for supply costs of \$20 per camper, not exceeding \$1,000 per location.
- Campers will pay a rate that would cover these costs. We will charge a rate of \$30 per week for a t-shirt, nine hours a day of programming, limited field trips, and supplies. Staff is developing a scholarship program to assist those without the ability to pay the full rate.
- The Reading Instruction Program associated with Read Fort Worth's 100x25 literacy initiative will continue in this mini-camp format, allowing for 45 minutes of structured literacy instruction daily.

The total budget savings associated with the restructured mini-camp is estimated to be \$357,995 for PARC and \$156,297 for NSD.

Mobile Recreation

The Mobile Recreation program is offered free of charge at four sites in the summer. If this program were not held, then the part-time salary savings would be \$93,000 in addition to \$8,000 in supplies. Due to the need to hire four site supervisors and 24 camp leaders to conduct the program at four sites, we cannot hold the program in its regular format this summer. Nevertheless, we intend to provide a more limited program as follows:

- Reduce the number of sites from four to two.

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- Use existing staff from the Fort Worth After School program and staff that have been recently hired to produce approximately \$50,000 in salary savings.
- Hours will run from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
- The maximum number of participants will be set per site based upon a 1:10 ratio. The number is likely to be less than 50 per site, versus the normal 150.
- Each site will have a maximum budget of \$1,000 for supplies.

Aquatics

The City will not be able to hold the traditional pool season at Forest Park and Marine Park because there is still too much uncertainty associated with the pandemic and its impacts; because lifeguards cannot obtain required certifications at this time; and because delays in obtaining certifications and hiring 40 temporary staff would potentially push the pool openings into late June or later in the summer, depending upon when stay-at-home orders might be lifted. Nevertheless, a late opening of these pools may be feasible, subject to appropriate public health guidelines.

In place of the traditional pool season, we intend to proceed as follows:

- By mid-May, as more information becomes available about the advisability of reopening various public facilities, we will determine whether, when, and how to open the Forest Park and Marine Park pools. We estimate that closing both pools for the full summer would save \$220,000 in part-time salaries.
- If opening these pools is feasible, then we would allow organizations with existing user agreements to continue pool use if they are able. Sigma Swim, recently merged with Fort Worth Area Swim Team, provides swim lessons at Forest Park and at Marine Park if enrollment numbers allow. Team Ridglea Masters uses the Forest Park pool for swim practice. These user groups bring in revenue of up to \$30,000 if all programs can operate normally. Minimal on-site staffing is needed for these user groups. Some lifeguards are still on the roster from last summer, so we would not need to hire additional staff.
- The Sycamore Sprayground will remain open.

Youth Sports

Pending future decisions about lifting emergency restrictions, youth sports staff may be able to offer some basketball, soccer, and other sports camps and clinics at community centers during the summer. We must, however, suspend the summer volleyball league because the normal registration schedule cannot take place. This action will generate a net savings of \$1,000 as we will save \$4,000 in Other Contractual Services funding for sports officials, while losing \$3,000 in revenue.

Adult Sports

The spring seasons for flag football, volleyball, softball, and basketball have been suspended, resulting in an estimated net revenue loss of \$5,170. Furthermore, in view of our inability to hire seasonal staff and to conduct normal registrations, the summer leagues for these sports -- scheduled to begin in May and June -- will also be suspended, resulting in an additional net revenue loss of approximately \$7,000. The Fort Worth Cup soccer tournament and the Fort Worth Classic softball tournament will remain on the August schedule, pending future decisions about lifting emergency restrictions.

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SUBJECT: 2020 SUMMER PROGRAMSMayor's Summer Reading Challenge and Other Library Services

The summer challenge will transition to an online platform and may start in the spring. This will allow users of all ages to sign up for the program and log their reading while the libraries are closed. Performer-based programming has been cancelled for the summer and if there is in-person programming, it will be conducted by staff. Online programming will continue, including the Stay at Home Bookclub (currently with 156 members), a new teen book club on Discord, craft instruction, Spanish classes, and much more. It is unclear at this time when the libraries will reopen this summer and with what level of service. A tiered reopening plan is being written and will consider social distancing and limited access.

If you have questions about this information, please contact the following department heads as appropriate:

- David Creek, Acting Park and Recreation Director (817-392-5744),
- Victor Turner, Neighborhood Services Director (817-392-8187),
- Gleniece Robinson, Education Strategies Director (817-392-6575), or
- Manya Shorr, Library Director (817-392-7707).

David Cooke
City Manager